

U.S. Plans to Spend \$110,000 to Build Nixon Data Vault

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The government plans to spend \$110,000 to install and guard a vault where former President Nixon's records will be stored near his home at San Clemente.

General Services Administrator Arthur F. Sampson told a Senate Appropriations subcommittee yesterday the sophisticated vault will provide better security for the records, including tapes of presidential conversations, than is available in Washington.

He said complete security is essential to prevent tampering, because tapes and other records may be subpoenaed for Watergate trials or other court actions involving Mr. Nixon.

Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) asked: "Are you saying that if the former President can get at the records you have to have greater security?" The tapes of his Watergate conversations contributed to Mr. Nixon's resignation last month.

Sampson did not respond directly, but said that if Mr. Nixon wants to listen to a tape a duplicate will be prepared for him. The original will remain in the vault.

Under the agreement signed by Mr. Nixon and Sampson last week, which was part of the arrangement under which President Ford granted Mr. Nixon a full pardon for any crimes he may have committed as President, the tapes will remain in the vault for five years, available for use in court cases.

Sampson was testifying in support of the \$850,000 requested for Mr. Nixon's use during the year ending next June 30 for his transition to private life and for the permanent allowances given former Presidents.

After signing the agreement on storing records with Mr. Nixon, Sampson changed some

of the money figures but the total remains at \$850,000. This includes \$450,000, the maximum permitted under the law, for transitional work, such as responding to 350,000 pieces of mail, and \$400,000 for pension, staff and other expenses under the Former Presidents Act.

What had first appeared as an unexplained \$100,000 contingency fund shrank to \$26,000 and a \$40,000 travel allowance dropped to \$1,000. The \$110,000 for the vault and five guards at about \$1,000 a year was a new item.

After it was agreed that the records would be stored in a federal building 12 miles from Mr. Nixon's home and far from Washington, there was less need for travel and more need for security, Sampson said.

Office space adjacent to the Nixon home was built at public expense of \$720,000 while he was President.

Secret Service protection provided Mr. Nixon and his family, as for all former Presidents under law, will cost more than \$600,000 a year, Sampson said.

Mr. Nixon now has detailed to him a staff of 13, headed by his former press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, who are on the White House payroll at an annual rate of \$340,000 a year.

Sampson said this staff will be available to Mr. Nixon as long as President Ford details them for that purpose. Presumably, Mr. Nixon will take over payment of staff from his fund if Congress approves it.

Subcommittee Chairman Joseph M. Montoya (D-N.M.) grumbled repeatedly that at a time when President Ford has tried to delay a federal pay raise, \$850,000 seemed too much to give Mr. Nixon. He said Lyndon B. Johnson never got more than half that much in any one year as a former President.